

(1) **Title:**

Ethnic Organizations and Cooperation of Multiple Stakeholders in Strengthening Transition and Promoting Diversity in Myanmar

(2) **Convener:** Chosein Yamahata

(3) **Description of panel:**

The opening of a new chapter in political history in 2016 gave much hope to the people and encouraged the international players to work with the NLD-led administration for bringing democracy, human rights, peace, and development, which had been absent in Myanmar for long. However, in contrast to the high hope and expectation, the realities on the ground are filled with many new challenges, unresolved old problems, and the emergence of sudden crises caused mainly by the multiple divisions exist in society. Due to the new opportunities and challenges faced differently by each group, the country is divided into a greater number of socially and self-identified groups in terms of ethnicity, religion, political belief, race, and social strata. Most of the recent crises are deliberately created by exploiting nationalism through religious extremism, ethnic inequality, colonial history, and multiple disparities, resulting in 'instability', 'divisions' and 'conflicts'. Therefore, non-state players, starting from ethnic organizations, local academics, media, and individuals have taken initiatives to play constructive, supplementary as well as evaluative roles to support the fragile transition. They are bridging the huge gap left by the state by promoting fair rights and opportunities for development, and equal voices for justice and diversity as an obligation of the citizens.

This panel will be a platform of exchange among presenters and between the speakers and the audience to accommodate different ideas, socio-ecological information, situational analysis, principles and approaches in dealing with local realities, national policy, and local politico-administrative implications. It also serves as a useful tool of both inputs and outputs in strengthening Myanmar's transition by building a 'stability' from the community level.

(4) **Single Session**

Presenters:

- Chosein Yamahata
- Myat Thet Thitsar
- Rainer Einzenberger
- Jai Leng Learn Kham
- Makiko Takeda

(5) **Discussant:** Bobby Anderson